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THE seventeenth annual New England Intercollegiate Geologic Excursion was held October 15 at Attleboro, Massachusetts, under the leadership of Professor J. B. Woodworth of Harvard University. Forty-eight persons representing thirteen institutions were present. The institutions represented were as follows: Associated Petroleum Engineers, Brown University, Colby College, College of Education, Providence, Harvard University, Massachusetts Agricultural College, Mount Holyoke College, Tufts College, University of Vermont, University of Washington, United States Geological Survey, Wesleyan University, and Yale University. The group visited the exposures of Dighton conglomerate in the vicinity, of Attleboro, the Wamsuuta series consisting of red shales, felsites and diabases in South Attleboro, the Cambrian outcrops at Hoppin Hill, the shale series of the Coal Measures near the station at Plainville containing fossil plants and amphibian footprints, and other minor localities in the vicinity of Red Rock Hill and Oldtown. Plans were discussed for the eighteenth excursion which will be held in the vicinity either of Amherst or Worcester, Massachusetts.

WE learn from the *Journal* of the American Medical Association that the board of directors of the Gorgas Memorial Institute at the national headquarters in Washington has elected the following officers: Dr. William C. Braisted, president; Dr. Franklin Martin, vice-president; Dr. Arthur P. Robbins, Burlington, Iowa, executive secretary, and Mr. Edward J. Stellwagen, president of the Union Trust Company, Washington, treasurer. The purpose of the organization of an executive committee is to further a movement to introduce the sanitary methods devised by the late Surgeon-General Gorgas in all the civilized countries of the world. Word was recently received by the institute that Dr. Richard P. Strong, dean of the department of tropical medicine of Harvard University and former director of the biologic laboratory at Manila has accepted the post of scientific director of the Gorgas Mem-

orial Institute of Tropical and Preventive Medicine to be built at Panama City on a site presented to the United States by Dr. Belisario Porras, president of the Republic of Panama. The presentation of the site was made recently in Philadelphia by José Lefevre, chargé d'affaires of Panama at Washington.

DR. CHARLES H. GILBERT, of the Bureau of Fisheries, and Field Assistant Henry O'Malley have returned from an extensive trip to Alaska, which was devoted to a study of the runs of salmon in the southeastern and central districts. Special attention was given to the salmon of Kodiak Island, where a rack had been constructed in Karluk River early in the season and the counting of red salmon ascending the stream was being carried on. It is reported that up to September 17, the total escapement of red salmon up the river was 1,322,000. Dr. Gilbert advises that the investigations in the Karluk region were most interesting and profitable. Every spawning stream tributary to Karluk Lake was examined.

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#### EDUCATIONAL NOTES AND NEWS

THE American Association of University Professors meet at Pittsburgh on December 29 and 30 in association with the national societies devoted to the economic and social sciences.

DR. THEODORE LYMAN, director of the Jefferson Physical Laboratory of Harvard University and professor of physics since 1913, has been made Hollis professor of mathematics and natural philosophy. He is the ninth incumbent of this foundation, which was established by Thomas Hollis in 1727. Lyman's three immediate predecessors were Joseph Lovering, 1838-1888, and Lyman's teachers and friends, B. O. Pierce, 1888-1914, and Wallace C. Sabine, 1914-1919.

PROFESSOR HAROLD J. LOCKWOOD has been appointed professor of electrical engineering in the Thayer School of Engineering of Dartmouth College, to fill the vacancy caused by the resignation of Professor F. E. Austin.

DR. SYDNEY ROBOTHAN MILLER, associate professor of clinical medicine in the Johns Hopkins Medical School and president of the American Congress of Internal Medicine, has joined the staff of the University of Maryland School of Medicine.

DR. W. MAGNER has accepted the position of director of the pathological department of the University of Toronto. He was formerly lecturer on pathology in University College, Cork.

#### DISCUSSION AND CORRESPONDENCE THE ACQUISITIVE INSTINCT IN CHILDREN AS AN EDUCATIONAL STIMULUS

THE educational value of the collections of various objects which children form has not received the universal recognition which it so well merits. The tendency to form collections of such objects as stamps, coins, post cards and bird's eggs has as its basis the instinct of acquisition. A child of two years hoards bits of cloth, clothes pins, and buttons without knowing why he does it. The object appeals to the child's senses, that is, the perception of the object stimulates his instinctive desire for possession.

Sometimes an epidemic of collecting will arise in a neighborhood as occurred in a suburb of Chicago, a few years ago, when most boys between the ages of eight and fourteen collected the pictures of baseball players coming with certain brands of tobacco. Boys collected the pictures because they saw others doing it, and because of that instinctive craving for things which please the senses. Here rivalry appeared. Boys vied with each other to see who could get the greatest number of pictures, and a value was placed upon them far in excess of their intrinsic worth.

The desire to collect without a definite purpose other than to see how many objects can be brought together continues into adolescence. At the age of twelve or thirteen, however, collections often assume an emotional character as those made up of souvenir spoons, theater ticket stubs, or later dance programs.

Up to this stage the instincts of acquisition, imitation, and emulation have furnished the stimulus for the collective mania, and even in collections of natural objects, reasoning has not played a basal part. Judgments were formed as to relative value, methods of acquisition, and arrangement of the objects, but as yet the purpose of collecting for systematic arrangement and study has not appeared.

Consider now the case of the stamp collector who has outgrown the desire for mere numbers. He considers methods of arrangement other than size or color, considering country and time of greater moment. He associates designs with historical events, and the portraits with national heroes. He notices the evolution of symbols and designs appearing on succeeding issues of stamps, as well as the progress made in printing and engraving from the earlier to the more modern representatives. Here is being developed the "scientific attitude of the mind," the expression of that desire to classify, arrange, and correlate fact. The comparing of concepts, of memory images, the formation of judgments, and reasoning enter into the mental process, while instinct is eclipsed by thought. Such a collection will furnish many lessons in reasoning; for in solving the problems arising in classification the habit of consistent thinking is materially aided.

Collections of natural objects as butterflies, shells, and leaves have an especially favorable influence upon the thought habit, but only if the desire to arrange and study systematically is present. The classification problems met with are so diverse and require such varied methods of approach that the training received in meeting them necessitates intense thought and a strong purpose.

It should be remembered, therefore, that a child's mania for collecting is the normal expression of an instinct; that this instinct can be diverted into emotional or intellectual channels; that when diverted intelligently it may be a great factor in the formation of the thought habit, the great purpose in any education. It seems well worth while to con-